

Reading Toolkit: Grade 8 Objective 2.A.3.c

Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Informational Text

Indicator 3. Apply knowledge of organizational patterns of informational text to facilitate understanding and analysis

Objective c. Analyze shifts in organizational patterns

Assessment Limits:

Portions of text that illustrate a shift in organizational pattern

Connection between shifts in organization and purpose

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Lesson Seeds

Reading Grade 8 Objective 2.A.3.c

Activities

- Prior to this activity the teacher should read and select examples of informational texts that contain shifting organizational structures. The teacher and students will read an informational text with a shifting organizational structure. Working together they will color-code the text matching a different color for each organizational pattern. Once the text has been color-coded, teacher and students will determine reasons for the shifting organization and how these shifts clarify the author's purpose.
- The teacher will select informational text for students to read that contains more than one organizational structure. After students have read the text they will identify with a highlighter, asterisk, or underlining the organizational structures: cause and effect, comparison/contrast, sequential, causal/chronological, classifying, main idea/supporting details. During class discussion students will discuss reasons why the information was presented in this manner, determine whether the organizational structures effectively support the author's purpose, and whether or not the patterns were helpful to the reader in understanding the text.

Clarification

Reading Grade 8 Indicator 2.A.3

To show proficiency of the skills stated in this indicator, a reader will show an understanding of the patterns in a text, which are its **organizational structures**. Using text features will assist a reader in determining the type of organization used. As the complexity of a text increases, a reader will advance from identifying of organizational structures to analyzing how the organizational structure helps create meaning.

The ability **to identify and analyze the organization of a text** is a necessary step to comprehension of an entire text. To determine the organizational structure of a text, a reader must first identify its subject or topic and survey its print features and graphic aids. There are diverse informational texts---essays, speeches, biographies, autobiographies, newspapers, magazines, and multiple types of real-world texts. The purpose of each of these text types governs its organizational structure. A narrative nonfiction text tells a true story so the organization would be sequential or chronological. An editorial often attempts to convince a reader to believe as the writer does. A standard organization for an editorial is information by degree of importance. Paying attention to how writing is organized offers a reader an efficient way to access information and to see the relationship among the elements of the text.

Knowledge and use of words and phrases commonly used in organizational patterns is essential to determining and analyzing a text structure. In order to do this, a reader must be able to locate within a text the words that signal organizational patterns. When this is accomplished, a reader can explain and analyze the contribution of the organizational plan to understand the meaning of an entire text. For example,

- Words such as first, second, and third show a chronology.
- Next, then and finally show a sequential order.
- Above, beneath, next to, and beside show a spatial order or description.
- Because and as a result of are words that signal a cause/effect relationship.

The words above indicate a movement in the text that may be a passage of time, a shift from one location to another or a relationship among ideas. Reading critically means constructing meaning from a text and evaluating what that text has to say. A critical reader can locate these transitional devices, combine them with prior knowledge of similar text and determine a purpose for the whole text. Furthermore, a critical reader can determine whether an organizational pattern is the best way to present information in a text. For example, an author may wish to make a point about a selected topic. A critical reader can make a judgment about the choice an author makes in the organization of his/her text.

For more complex texts, a critical reader can determine through knowledge of transitional devices a shift to indicate a change in organizational pattern. An author may introduce an essay with an anecdote organized in a chronological pattern but may then move into a problem solution pattern to continue. A critical reader can note the words that signal a chronological pattern and detect the change to words that signal the problem solution pattern, thereby understanding that the structure of the text has shifted. Since pattern and author's purpose work together, a critical reader may then ascertain dual purposes within a text.

As readers have more experiences with various patterns of text and the words that signal them, readers can **use those organizational patterns to locate specific information**. A

practiced reader will look for a text pattern using those words that signal patterns and indicate shifts in patterns and then use all of these elements to access specific text details that will support an interpretation and evaluation of a text.